

REMARKS

This Amendment and the following remarks are intended to fully respond to the Office Action dated October 22, 2004. In that Office Action, claims 1-17, 19, 20 and 24-36 were examined; claims 1, 2, 4-13, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 27-36 were allowed and claims 3, 14, 15, and 24-26 were rejected.

In this Response, the rejected claims 3, 14, 15, and 24-26 have been canceled. Therefore, only allowed claims 1, 2, 4-13, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 27-36 remain present for examination.

Claim Amendments

Applicants cancel herein claims 3, 14, 15, and 24-26 without prejudice. Claims 7 and 10 are amended herein to correct informalities.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

In light of the claim amendments, the Examiner's rejections of claims 3, 14, 15, and 24-26 are moot, as all remaining claims now contain allowable subject matter or now depend from an independent claim that contains allowable subject matter. The Applicants reserve the right to respond to the Examiner's argument and prosecute the cancelled subject matter in a future continuing application.

Response to Examiner's Statement for Reasons for Allowance

Applicants acknowledge the allowance of claims 1, 2, 4-13, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 27-36 in the subject application by the Examiner with appreciation.

The Applicants agree with the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance to the extent that the claims of the present invention are patentable over the references in the record. The Applicants expressly traverse the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance to the extent that any comment is intended or has the effect of limiting a claim scope, explicitly or implicitly, by not reciting verbatim the respective claim language, or is intended or has the effect of limiting a claim scope by stating or implying that all the reasons for patentability are in any way fully enumerated.

Moreover, it appears that the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance reiterates the Examiner's arguments made during prosecution. By virtue of the Examiner's allowance of the claims over the cited references and the associated arguments, it is believed that the previous arguments made by the Examiner have been overcome. Additionally, Applicants specifically do not acquiesce or agree in any manner as to the comments made by the Examiner regarding what the prior does or does not teach. Indeed, Applicants have pointed out the errors in the comments/arguments in Applicants' Responses to previous Office Actions.

The Applicants further point out that the reasons for allowance set forth by the Examiner are not the only reasons that claims 1, 2, 4-13, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 27-36 are allowable. Further reasons for allowance of the claims beyond those enumerated by the Examiner are described and set forth in the Applicants' specification. In addition, structures and methods that perform substantially the same function in substantially the same way to achieve substantially the same results are included within the scope of the claims.

Finally, as the Examiner's reasons for allowance are not exhaustive, such reasons for allowance do not establish an estoppel against Applicants seeking and obtaining allowance of additional, broader claims in a continuation application, which Applicants reserve the right to file.

Conclusion

Claims 1, 2, 4-13, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 27-36 remain pending in this application. Applicants believe that all claims in the application are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request the application be allowed and pass to issuance as soon as possible. Should any additional issues need to be resolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attempt to resolve those issues.

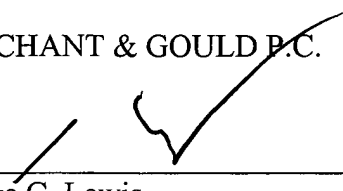
It is believed that no further fees are due with this Response. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiencies or credit any overpayment with respect to this patent application to deposit account number 13-2725.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.

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George C. Lewis
Reg. No. 53,214
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(303) 357-1639